

FIRST RESPONDERS TO SUSPECTED ANTHRAX INCIDENTS

- ◆ Personnel responding to a suspected anthrax incident should attempt to avoid going directly into the contaminated area and/or having contact with contaminated individuals. If possible, establish contact via a telephone.
- ◆ As a last resort, first responders should have direct contact with contaminated personnel in order to reassure them of the situation and outline what will be happening over the next couple of hours. Above all, **REMAIN CALM!**
- ◆ Individuals exposed to a suspected anthrax substance will NOT exhibit visible symptoms during the early stages of such an incident.
- ◆ Keep those individuals who have been exposed to the suspected anthrax quarantined in the area where the exposure occurred. Place the suspected anthrax back into its original container and place that in a bio-hazard bag or a plastic garbage bag and seal. Remember, this is evidence.
- ◆ Coordinate the evacuation of personnel not exposed to the suspected anthrax. Check the direction of the wind and make sure that evacuees are placed up wind of the incident scene.
- ◆ This incident will be treated as a hazardous material incident, so fire services will be in command. Fire services will activate an incident command system and establish a command post. The first law enforcement officer on the scene should assume the role of law enforcement liaison (unless contaminated) until a supervisor or commander arrives.
- ◆ Assist with establishing a perimeter. A *hot zone* will need to be established. Only personnel in protective suits and breathing apparatus should be in the *hot zone*. Since most law enforcement do not have such self-contained breathing equipment and protective clothing, they should stay out of the *hot zone*.
- ◆ Keep radio advised of the situation at all times. While you will obviously be very busy, commanders at the post will need to be kept apprised of the situation in order to provide appropriate support.
- ◆ Law enforcement personnel who become contaminated will be required to be decontaminated and transported to begin medical treatment.